



Buying your fresh fruits and vegetables from Michigan makes good plain sense.

Quite simply, food grown in Michigan is fresher and it tastes better.

Selecting Michigan grown fruits and vegetables helps support our rural communities and preserves our unique agricultural heritage that spring from true beauty of this land that we know as Michigan. Asparagus grows abundantly near the shoreline of Lake Michigan and it is in this loamy soil asparagus greets the world each spring. Asparagus is the first crop to emerge from the earth and when the spears pierce the ground they tell us that the season has begun and more delicious crops are on their way.

The Asparagus industry in Michigan contributes over \$25 million to our state's economy each year and supports over 350 family farms. These small family farms not only make financial contributions to their communities, but they make up the fabric and flavor of a sacred way of life. Our nation was built on the rich traditions of rural life, of people connected to the land and a natural way of living. Keeping our small local farms vital and active ensures our not only our culture but the quality of our lives.

Buying Michigan agricultural products generates revenue and reduces the cost of food. Just consider that the average item of food now travels more than 1500 miles to reach your plate and that nearly 60% of your food dollar is petrol-chemically related. A reefer truck traveling from California will burn nearly 500 gallons of diesel fuel to deliver a load of produce and the price that hauler pays for his gas will be buried in the cost of your food.

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In an era of increased globalization, maintaining local food production is more critical than ever. Land use, communities and food are all linked together. A healthy local food system provides not only nutritious and safe food, but it also provides jobs and revenue that nurture and sustain communities from Beulah to Hamtramck. Selecting Michigan grown and processed foods increases jobs and maintains the standard of living we all enjoy. Eat lots of asparagus this month – for yourself and your neighbor.